

Breastfeeding at 2 Weeks

A Counseling Guide for Health Care Professionals

Counseling Message for Mothers	Background for Professionals
Feed your baby when you see signs of hunger (typically 10-12 times every 24 hours).	Two-week old breastfed babies need to nurse often. Signs of hunger include hand-to-mouth activity, rooting, pre-cry facial grimaces, fussing sounds, and crying.
Nurse your baby until you see signs of fullness.	Signs of fullness include turning the head away from the nipple, showing interest in things other than eating, closing the mouth, and deep sleep. As babies get older, they are more easily distracted during a feeding and may need gentle, repetitive stimulation to re-focus on feeding (e.g., rocking, patting, and stroking).
Burp your baby at natural breaks during the feeding like midway through or when switching breasts.	Babies can be burped by gently rubbing or patting their backs while parents hold them against their shoulder or chest or by supporting baby in a sitting position on their lap.
Breastfed babies this age still have very soft and unformed frequent stools.	It is normal for stools to look like cottage cheese and yellow mustard. The number of bowel movements will decrease as baby gets older. Breastfed infants 6 weeks and older may have a stool once every few days.
Breastfed babies often go through growth spurts at approximately these ages — 2-3 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months.	Baby's appetite increases during growth spurts so baby will nurse more frequently for a few days. Frequent nursing will increase mother's milk supply to meet baby's new needs.
Avoid pacifiers and bottles for the first 3-4 weeks.	Encourage mothers to wait until their milk supply is established before introducing pacifiers or bottles. Frequent use of pacifiers makes it hard for mothers to tell when baby is hungry. Early use of bottles decreases mother's milk supply and leads to early weaning.



Breastfeeding at 2 Weeks (continued)

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If formula supplementation is medically needed, offer iron-fortified infant formula.	Encourage mothers to wait to introduce formula supplementation when breastfeeding is well established. Supplements fill up baby and make baby less interested in breastfeeding. Recommend iron-fortified formula until the baby's first birthday. For healthy babies, soy or protein hydrolysate formulas do not offer any advantages over cows' milk formulas as a supplemental feeding.
Wait until baby is around 6 months old before offering any juice or solid foods.	Breastmilk provides the nutrition baby needs for the first 6 months. Developmental signs of readiness for solid foods include sitting with support and controlling the head and neck. Early introduction of solids may decrease nursing time, affect milk production, and predispose an infant to allergies.
Vitamin D is the only vitamin or mineral supplement needed by breastfed babies before 6 months of age. A daily supplement of 200 IU of vitamin D is recommended.	Breastfed babies less than 6 months old do not need fluoride supplements. <u>Note:</u> If a baby has been diagnosed with iron deficiency anemia, an iron supplement is warranted.
You can continue breastfeeding or feeding expressed breastmilk if you return to work or school.	Breastfeeding mothers have several feeding options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breastfeed baby (child care provider is on-site or nearby). • Breastfeed when with baby and collect/store breastmilk for feedings when apart. • Breastfeed when with baby and formula-feed when apart. Tell mothers how to safely store expressed breastmilk.
Questions? Call one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified breastfeeding educators • Certified lactation consultants • Health care professionals • La Leche League • Peer support groups • Physicians • WIC staff 	Mothers and babies are not born knowing how to breastfeed. It takes patience and practice to learn and recognize each other's signals. Identify sources of support from family members, friends, and the community. Encourage mothers to call with questions or for advice.

